61 Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

The Third Panslav Congress opened in Moscow on May 9, 1943. Two thousand people assembled—authors, artisans, soldiers, partisans, priests of the Eastern rites. There were seen, side by side, the Soviet General Alexander Gondorov, the Czech Colonel Svoboda, the Colonel of the Polish 'Kosciuszko' Division, Sigmund Berling, the Metropolitan of Kiev, Nicolas. Once more the union of all the oppressed Slavs was urged; the Czechs were invited to evade the total mobilisation which the Germans were organising in their country. Already the partisans were everywhere at work; the Soviet victories guaranteed the triumph of the common cause. The Congress voted messages to Stalin, to Churchill, to Roosevelt, to all the Slavs in the world.

In the month of July,[1] an exhibition in Moscow showed specimens of the independent Slav press—of more than a hundred reviews and newspapers which were then appearing in the United States, in Great Britain, in Canada, in Australia, in the Argentine.

The Panslav Committee held its sixth full Assembly in Moscow on October 16 and 17, 1943. It voted congratulations to the Red Army, to the Yugoslav partisans, to the first Czecho-Slovak Brigade in Russia—which was about to leave for the front—to the Union of Poles (since October 12 the Kosciuszko Division had been in the firing line). The Czech Zdenek Mejedli, Professor of Musical Art in Prague, spoke of the reconstitution of Czechoslovak unity; the Metropolitan Nicolas told of the German Army's atrocities on Russian territory; the Academician Derjavin recounted the exploits of Russian military history—the defeat inflicted by Alexander Nevsky on the Teutonic Knights on the ice of Lake Peipus (1242), the prophecy of the victor, 'He who attacks us with the sword will perish by the sword', which, for seven centuries, was the watchword of the Russians; the crushing of the Teutonic Knights at Tannenberg (Grunwald) in 1410; Frederick's defeat in the Seven Years' War (Jagersdorf, Kunersdorf) which carried the Muscovite troops to Berlin; the failure of the German adventure in Ukraine in 1918.

'We see', Derjavin was to write, 'the Slavonic peoples' hatred of the Fascist invader grow under our eyes. . . . One single front of national revolt unites the Slavs against Hitlerism in the name of the defence of liberty, of political independence, of civilisation and honour'.

1 [1943 -- Analyst]

6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

Negroids, and of Jews, and that this degeneracy warrants our suspecting American morals'. Remarks which were not very flattering for the Slovaks, the Croats, and the Bulgars, whose Governments were still allies of the Axis. 'Naturally', Radoslavov, a Bulgarian minister was to say, 'we belong to the Slavonic race. But we are, first and foremost, Bulgars. We act in accordance with our own interests and not with the interests of the Slavonic peoples in general'. And the *Zora,* of Sofia, went one farther, reproaching Stalin, a Georgian, who had always rejected racial concepts, for posing as the head of the Slavs, and for rallying to racial theories. 'With God's help', this paper concluded, 'the Soviets will never be able to overthrow the Eastern front'.

Other objections kept polemical discussions alive. M. Benes one day expressed to the Czechoslovak Council his desire to see Poland 'independent, democratic, and friendly', joining the Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement. 'This', he said, 'would mean the definite settlement of all the differences outstanding between our three countries and would assure their future by guaranteeing peace in this part of the globe; Germany would never again dare to start a world war'.

This declaration aroused unfriendly or sceptical comments in part of the Turkish press. For a long time that press had been watching the development of the Slavonic orientation in Soviet policy. 'The new Panslav movement', the officially-inspired *Ulus* had said, 'will be followed with the greatest attention, especially by those non-Slavonic nations which were formerly the object of that policy'.[9]

This time it was the *Tanin* which asked why, since the expression 'Pangermanic Imperialism' applied to the union of Germans, that of 'Panslavonic Imperialism' should not describe the union of Slavs? An article in *Pravda,*[10] an obvious reflection of Moscow's ideas on Slav solidarity, refuted this assertion at great length. The Soviet leader-writer recalled that, for a thousand years, the history of Eastern Europe had been that of the defence of the Slavonic peoples against the German invader. 'The historical atmosphere has changed', he said, 'but the object of the German conquerors is unchangeable—to separate the Slavs by force'. There were, he added (for the benefit of the

[9] August 13, 1941.
[10] February 19, 1944.

6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

Turkish journalist) some people in Eastern Europe who would like to return to the old policy of oppression of the Slavonic peoples. . . . The new friendship among these peoples, related to each other and bound by century-old ties of a common culture, was being tempered in the crucible of the war of liberation. . . . Their *rapprochement* would displease none but those who dreamed of seeing them dominated once again'.

* * *

The Orlemanski affair has shown us an attempt at Slav solidarity in the domain of religious tolerance. In the same order of things, but this time in connection with the Orthodox Slavs, we cannot omit to mention the deep impression produced by the restoration of juridical personality to the Russian Orthodox Church (September, 1943) and the elevation of the Metropolitan Serge to the office of Patriarch, abolished in 1721 by Peter the Great and which enjoyed a brief restoration in 1917. With its hundred and fifty million followers, the Orthodox community, placed at the cross-roads of the war, was undergoing one of the most tragic crises in its history. Its suffering was all the more serious, inasmuch as the Orthodox Churches are organised on national lines, in contrast to the hierarchical unity of Roman Catholicism. These churches are bound together by identical doctrine and canons. But, in the course of the centuries, they have progressively relaxed the bonds of dependence which used to attach them to the Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Religious autonomy has advanced side by side with the emancipation of the nationalities. In restoring the rights of the Church, Stalin not only indicated his desire to reawaken the traditions of Russian national life, within the framework of a social renovation; he also tightened the historic bonds between his country and the Balkan nations of the Orthodox religion, thus reinforcing, by new spiritual affinities, sympathies founded on community of race, of oppression, and of destiny.

Germany tried to foil this policy by summoning to Vienna, on November 5, under the presidency of the Metropolitan of Belgrade, the Orthodox prelates adhering to the Axis cause, and especially the Metropolitans of Berlin and of Paris, who declared the election of the new Patriarch to be null and void. This demonstration was of no effect; the vast majority of the Serbian, Rumanian, Greek and Bulgarian hierarchies either had nothing

6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

175 648 aggressive policy, or against any other State which might revive this policy, under any form whatsoever.

Backed both without and within by the might of Moscow, Tito's régime seemed to be irresistibly established.

Its[1] first care had been to renew its claim to the territories of which Yugoslavia had been defrauded immediately after the First World War. It raised the question of Trieste and its hinterland. The Yugoslav delegation in London warmly defended a case supported by detailed and absolutely pertinent documentation, based on ethnographic and economic considerations. But they were imprudent enough to allow it to be understood that they would lay claim to Aegean or Hellenic Macedonia—which was bound to alienate the goodwill of Great Britain. They also mentioned the exorbitant sum which they intended to demand from Italy by way of reparations—thereby upsetting the United States, from whom Italy was at the same time seeking material aid to help her out of her desperate financial situation.

642 661 175 Yet, to tell the truth, the distrustful atmosphere which grew up around the Yugoslav claims arose more directly from the form of government and the political principles established by Tito. Under colour of anti-Fascism, the régime exercised the same reprisals against all its detractors. It was accused of borrowing the methods of the totalitarian régimes; the Opposition said that it had introduced the word 'Democracy' into the name of the State in order to dispense with it in reality, as, in the past, Pavelich gave the name of 'Independent State of Croatia' to a political offshoot of the Axis. He governed, on Russian lines, a very sensitive nation, which perhaps had not a very 'Western' notion of democracy, but had always shown itself stubbornly attached to the external forms of its independence. Certainly Tito had succeeded in grouping around him zealous young men, who had been tested under fire and were indifferent to the juridical or constitutional rites which, in the West, accompany the exercise of liberty. Certainly, too, the Yugoslav National Front represented itself not as a single party but as a synthesis of all the various energies resolved to work for the restoration of public life.

656 •204 625 Nevertheless to Anglo-American eyes the régime appeared to be a dictatorship. Was not its slogan—'No liberty for the enemies of liberty'—calculated to justify an administration

1 [Tito's régimes -- Analyst]

6: Mousset H-4 (no date) 1950 E16 Slavic Peoples E16

founded on despotism and personal power? The law of August 25, 1945 on the control of the press banned not only the ex-'collaborators', but also the publishers of 'alarmist' news or of news 'contrary to the general interest'—as conceived by the Government, naturally. A well-informed police organisation, modelled on Russian methods, ceaselessly exercised a very close watch over public opinion and, naturally, indulged in arbitrary arrests and acts of violence.

This policy led to dissension within the Government. The leader of the Serbian Democratic Party, Milan Grol, resigned on August 19; on October 8[1] he was followed into retirement by Dr. Ivan Choubachich and the Minister Chouteĭ, both Croat Agrarians.

Choubachich's resignation was serious, for it upset a ministerial equilibrium which had been agreed upon among the Allies. Yet what was this agreement worth, since Tito, repudiating the terms of the compromise which had sanctioned his authority, had pronounced against the monarchy? 'Not one of our combatants thought that anything new could be created under the leadership of the King, especially as the Nediches and Mihaĭloviches committed their crimes in his name. . . . The point is, whether the monarchy is compatible with the new system of Yugoslav Federal Democracy. . . . For several reasons, I think it is not'.

The next day (August 8, 1945) King Peter replied to this declaration by withdrawing from the Regents the power they held from him.

Tito was not intimidated by this retort. He declared that the Government acted in agreement with all the creative and constructive forces of the country, with all sincerely democratic parties. The masses of the populace had acquired, during the war, firmly-rooted political knowledge which had nothing in common with the electoral catchwords with which they previously used to be taken in.

The Opposition replied that free elections would prove the truth of this assertion, whereas those to which the country had been called were not free. The Americans and the English repeatedly emphasised the reserves they made regarding their attitude towards the régime which would result from this poll.

The elections took place on November 11.[1] They gave to the

1 [1945 -- Analyst]